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DESTITUTE MOTHERS AND INFANTS. Boston, Mass.

Report for 1898

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OBJECTS AND METHODS OF OUR WORK.

The main points which distinguish this from other charities are:—

1. The working without an institution, and thus coming into personal relations with those whom we help, while we avoid the heavy expenses and cumbrous methods which all institutions require.

If our account of expenditure is examined and compared with that of any home or hospital, it will be seen that, with little expense, we assist a large number of women.

2. Ours is the only charity in Boston which has for its object the assistance of *mothers*, as such, both married and unmarried. Others aid “fallen women,” “friendless girls,” and the like. While including the unmarried among our mothers, we think it more wholesome to aid them as “mothers” than as “fallen.”

3. While the first two points still distinguish us from other charities, with objects, at least, partly similar, our third principle, we are glad to say, has been adopted to some extent, at least, by others.

When we began our work twenty-five years ago, there was in Boston *no* charity intended to care for infants which did not involve the separation of the mother and child. Now there are several which see clearly the advantage of keeping together a mother and infant, even when the mother is unmarried. A woman who is parted from her child is more likely to yield a second time to temptation. One who retains the personal charge of her baby has a wholesome occupation for her mind and heart, and a constant incentive to an upright, industrious life.

The address of Miss Clarke is No. 27 Fayette Street, Boston. Her room (up one flight) is open to any one who desires to consult her, every week-day afternoon except Saturday from 2.30 to 4.30 o'clock.

The address of Miss Parkman is Room 48, Charity Building, Chardon Street, Boston. Her room is open on Monday and Thursday from 2 to 4 P.M.

REPORT

FOR

1898

Our charity has now been in existence twenty-five years ; and, therefore, this report comes at an important period of our history.

If we were to tell the story of our experience during the last quarter of a century, we should be inclined to call it "The Story of an Invisible Institution," since our work has been done without any of the outward paraphernalia of an institution, without a building or board of directors, without matrons or officers.

At this period it is natural to pause, and to ask ourselves the following questions :—

1. Has it been proved that the object of our work is important and desirable ?
2. Are the principles on which it has been conducted sound ?
3. Have our methods of working, by their results, justified themselves as practical ?

Twenty-five years ago, the only way to help a mother without a home, and not in a position to support her infant, was to place it in an institution, thus separating parent and child, and making the child wholly an object of charity, usually given up for adoption as soon as this could be arranged. But the institutions where an infant received good care were few in number and overwhelmed with applications ; and, while waiting for ad-

mittance, the child might die for want of care and wholesome food.

To give at the right moment the help which makes a woman able to wholly support herself and her infant, prevents pauperism, limits the needless expenditure of money in charity, saves the innocent from suffering, trains the reckless and improvident so that they become useful, self-respecting members of society, and in some cases saves a woman not yet depraved from a life of sin and misery.

The principle that a mother (when she loves her infant, and is ready to work for it, and anxious to lead an upright life), should retain it in her own care, receiving such partial and temporary aid as is necessary, has been proved sound by the experience of twenty-five years.

We have assisted during these years some thousands of mothers, many of them respectable married women, but a large proportion unmarried. We sometimes hear the statement made that it is not worth while to help a woman who has taken one wrong step. We earnestly protest against this idea, which to us seems a serious error. It is the rule that those whom we help do well; the exception, when they disappoint us. With some we remain in relations for many years. The child whom we knew as an infant twenty years ago is now a young man or woman of good, upright character, self-supporting, and perhaps assisting in the support of a family. Of a large number of mothers we retain an oversight for several years, and after that see them or hear from them occasionally. Many marry respectably, the child being adopted by the husband; and the mother in this case has nothing to conceal, but begins her new life on a basis of truth and honesty.

It is practically never that a mother whom we help deserts her infant.

It is with pleasure that we feel that we no longer stand alone in regard to the principle that a mother and child should not be separated under the conditions mentioned, but that other charities are now working on the same basis with us.

Our second principle is still not adopted by any other charity intended to assist young girls who have taken one wrong step. We find a difficulty in making it understood that to our work it is fundamental and primary. We alone help mothers as mothers, both married and unmarried,—not “fallen women,” “friendless girls,” “unfortunate” women, nor even “unmarried mothers.” There are charities in Boston which have for their object the assistance of all these. But their method is to place a woman in an institution where she is classed with others who have gone more or less astray. The emphasis is here laid upon the sin; and the moral atmosphere, like the air of a hospital, is enfeebling. It has been well said that work like ours can never be perfectly done until every case is isolated. There is no danger that the patient’s fault will be ignored. As by our method there is no concealment, the wounded spirit has a chance to heal “by the first intention.” But, as the best medicines are fresh air and exercise, so the best moral medicines are wholesome surroundings and steady work.

We ought here to emphasize the point that our charity does not include the depraved. We are far from believing that it is of no use to try to save a woman who has led a life of sin; but the methods and appliances necessary for such work differ essentially from those needed in ours and, therefore, the two objects cannot well be combined.

Often a young woman who has taken one wrong step is anxious to redeem the past, able and willing to exert herself, and has many good traits of character. Another may be weaker, and need more constant care and watching; but her gradual improvement will repay the time and thought expended on her. It is unjust to regard either as on a level with members of a degraded class.

We have watched in many cases the development of the higher nature in a young woman who, at first, seemed childish, selfish, and frivolous. Unselfish love, wholesome work,—these are the healing angels. For an unmarried mother who loses

her child we feel much anxiety, and are obliged to watch over her with more incessant care than is needed by one who has the constant incentive to a good life which is given by the care of her infant.

Nor is the child sacrificed to the welfare of the mother, as might be supposed to be the case by those uninformed on the subject. The family where a mother is placed as domestic often becomes warmly attached to the infant; and it grows up among the best surroundings, as the letters printed with this report will show.

It requires discrimination, indeed, to understand the capacity of each applicant; but experience teaches us this. And only by discrimination can such cases be rightly handled. In all charity work there are difficult psychological problems, perhaps more in ours than in most. But there are some underlying principles which have to be worked out by wise, practical methods; and it is possible to succeed only by giving patient, candid, and humble attention to each question. We will mention a few points which seem of primary importance:—

A full-grown woman, or even a young girl, cannot be managed for in the same way that one can decide and plan for a child. If a somewhat shiftless and idle girl comes under the charge of a zealous and energetic person, accustomed to deal with children, the danger is that the young woman will be handled in a way that gives her the idea that the responsibility rests with the lady who is helping her and arranging for her, not with herself. If she is carried about, without much reference to her own plans, placed here and placed there, her board paid for her, told "such a person will do this or that for you," she feels that some one else is bound to provide for her, the motive for exertion is gone, and she becomes a critic of those who are helping her instead of being earnest in the desire to exert herself.

In the first interview with a new applicant, we begin by giving her the idea that her future welfare will depend on her-

self. Coming to us with the childish expectation that we can, by a mere exertion of our will, place her in just such a position as she happens to have in her mind, it is necessary to disabuse her of this error. When she understands that, with all the good will in the world, no one can obtain for her a desirable situation, nor retain her in one, unless she does her best to deserve it, the first step is taken. Another important point is not to *urge* upon her a course to which she is opposed, however much we may ourselves see it to be the wisest. A feeble mind will often yield to persuasion, but will soon return to its original bias, and will sometimes resent as an injury the very fact of having been persuaded. A wilful or suspicious nature is hardened in opposition by an eager attempt to influence her. The woman must therefore come to the desired position of her own accord. We can indeed, by tact and judicious suggestion and information, be instrumental in leading her to form a resolution; but the final decision must be made by herself, honestly and candidly, without undue influence from us. Now to assist to *form a volition* in another mind is certainly a delicate and difficult matter, but it is an important part of this kind of work.

To *begin* in the right way is so important that we desire earnestly to be placed in communication with those whom we help as early as possible.

During the first ten years of our existence, the larger proportion of mothers were assisted by our finding good boarding-places for their infants,—the mother, in such a case, visiting her child weekly, and paying a certain proportion of her wages for its board, we also paying something toward this expense. But it has proved a better way to place mother and child together in a family where the mother earns low wages in consequence of having her child with her. Even a mother who is warmly attached to her child loses her affection for it if she does not take care of it herself; and the weekly visit is sometimes made difficult by circumstances which cannot be pre-

vented. Only in exceptional cases are children now boarded, and then for as brief a period as possible.

As it has been seriously suggested that one danger liable to occur in our work is that a mother of bad character might desert an infant which, being received into a good home, would be greatly injured by the mother returning to claim it, we resume here the two or three points already mentioned. (1) We do not assist a mother of bad character, nor recommend that a woman *of this type* should be advised or helped to keep her child in her care. (2) A woman of affectionate disposition and good character loses her affection for her infant, when she does not have it in her own charge. (3) That a woman degraded enough to desert her infant will return and claim it after years have passed by is so improbable as to be practically impossible.

There is one point which we desire to emphasize as strongly as possible. Whenever a hospital receives as maternity patients unmarried young women, it is of great importance that work like ours should supplement the medical part of the institution.

An inexperienced young girl, ignorant of the dangers which the city holds for a person in her friendless condition, leaves her country home and arrives at the hospital, expecting to be received the same day. She finds that weeks, perhaps months, must elapse before she can be admitted. It is at this period that she is in danger of falling into the hands of those who offer her shelter and profess kindness to her from the worst motives. It would be better that all maternity hospitals, not provided permanently and systematically with those whose business it is to see that a patient applying to them is protected at this time, should be abolished, since, if without other resources, she would be received at Tewksbury, where she would be sheltered from the worst danger. On the patient leaving the hospital, the same danger is repeated, and the same protection needed.

From a large number of letters received, we select the following. All are from unmarried mothers:—

I.

(A mother whose infant had died.)

OCT. 6, 1898.

Dear Miss H.,—I will let you know that I have a nice place and a good place,—as good as there is in B. and as nice a place as you could wish to see, and as nice people as I have seen since I left home. There are seven in the family. Mr. and Mrs. F. are just as kind to me as my own father and mother could be. Mrs. F. pays me three dollars a week, and gave me a lot of presents besides. I can go to church every Sunday morning and night. I only wish you could see them all,—such nice people as you ever saw. We had a nice reception down at the church for our pastor; and Mr. and Mrs. F. took me up to the fair, and I enjoyed it first-rate. I am in the best of health. Hoping to hear from you soon,

Ever yours truly.

Nov. 26, 1898.

I received your letter all right. I was glad to hear from you.

In regard to —, I thought you would have blamed me for his coming here. He came here on business, and sent me a card, and told me that he was here in town but one afternoon, and, if I wanted to see him, to call and see him. I asked Mrs. F. what I should do. She said, "Tell him to call here, and see you; and, if not, he can stay away." I just said, "Call at the house, if you want to see me"; and he did not. That was the last I heard from him, and I thought better for Mrs. F. to explain it to you than myself. I did just as she told me. Mrs. F. and her young ladies are so kind to me that I cannot help but do good.

DEC. 27, 1898.

I am so thankful that you had remembered me by sending the booklet and a dollar. I am in a great trouble this Christmas. I heard from my mother that she was given up for death. . . .

I hope some time I will see you, and have a talk with you about the dear little one whom you cared for until the end.

Mrs. F. and her family are so kind I cannot explain to you. The family of seven gave me presents, books and gloves and handkerchiefs and white

aprons and a picture, and all the sympathy besides. I must close with love to you.

(The letter numbered 1 in those from employers is from the employer of this woman.)

2.

DEC. 16, 1898.

Dear Miss H.,— I write to let you know that I am very well satisfied. I could ask nothing better. I fully appreciate your kindness in placing me in so nice a place.

My daughter has been quite sick since we have been out here. She is still taking medicine. She is much better now, though; and I sincerely hope she will pull through all right.

JAN. 12, 1899.

I received your token of loving remembrance at Christmas, and I thank you very much indeed. It was not only a pleasure, but a surprise, because I did not expect to be remembered.

I am happy to say that my daughter is decidedly better. I shall try and call to see you as soon as I can. I have received the December and January *Household*, which I am more than pleased with. I think it an excellent paper, and it is also very helpful. I will now close, thanking you for your loving remembrance and gift.

I remain yours respectfully.

3.

Nov. 25, 1898.

I must write to you and let you know how I am getting along,— very well. I suppose you don't know that we are in Maine since the first of October, when Mrs. T. came from abroad. She thought that it would be a good thing for us to go to Maine, so we closed up the other house. I think they will go very soon, for it is so cold here. They have lots of company at present.

I have been wanting to write to you so long. G. is a good boy. I wish you could see him. He is out doors all the time. He has a sled, and has a good time. We had quite a snow-storm here. I am very well myself. It seems that I get so strong when I come to Lebanon that I don't want to go back to Sharon. My dear Miss H., I could not tell you how good they are to G. I have got so that I can cook anything. Miss T. is

surprised to see how I learn so quick. Please write soon. With lots of love to you.

4.

DEC. 22, 1898.

My dear Miss H.,— I want to thank you so much for the lovely Christmas presents which you gave me. I did not think I would get any presents, especially from you, as you have been giving me presents all the time since I first saw you; for I have had everything nice and comfortable all this time, and you have done so much for my baby, too. They helped him so much at the hospital. I think he is better in every way.

When I think how very kind you have always been to me and how much you have helped me, I cannot help crying; and I pray to God every night that he may bless you in every way. Very gratefully.

5.

JULY 10, 1898.

Dear Friend, Miss H.,— Just a few lines to let you know how I am getting along, and hoping you will excuse me for not letting you know before now. I have a nice place. It was worth waiting for. Of course, the work is hard enough; but I should work any place I'd go to. Mrs. — is very nice, and very good to the baby. She takes her quite often. She is very fond of children. You would not know J. now, she is after getting so fat and big. I think Mrs. — is going away for a week. We will be lonesome after her. I guess the baby will miss her. She takes care of her Monday mornings, when I am washing. She is very good indeed.

I do get up at half-past five every morning. That's early. We have to put up with lots. There is no place perfect. I do be awful busy but Sunday. I sew every afternoon for the baby, making short dresses; for I have plenty to do between them all. The baby is good. She sleeps a lot. Good-by. Your friend.

DEC. 14, 1898.

I received your welcomed letter to-day. I was glad to hear from you, and would have written long ago; but I did not have anything to say. I suppose you did not hear of Mrs. L.'s death. You know the invalid that was here died about two months ago. Of course, the work can't be so hard. I don't care for the work now. In the hot days in the summer I had ten in the family, not counting the baby or myself. She paid me a dollar and

a half then : she only gives me a dollar now. She only gave me a dollar and a half for six weeks. She cannot afford any more, she said. I can do all the cooking but the pies, and I'd do them, too ; but she'd rather do them, for Saturday is busy on me. The pay is very small, but it won't last forever. Of course, I won't say anything to Mrs. —; for she don't intend to pay any more. I suppose she can get lots for that price. She is very good to me and also the baby. She thinks everything of J. She is a very good child. I can do my work easy, and always did, with the baby. She is not very much trouble now. She was never sick yet, thank God. I guess Mrs. — is pleased with my work. She has said nothing since I came. I am here six months the 16th of this month. How foolish I was to put myself in this strait ! There is no cure now. There is nothing to do but to take care of ourselves for the future.

I don't want anything as much as a pair of shoes, but if you cannot put out so much as that, you can send whatever you please. I like anything you send. You can send anything you please to the baby. I am sure it is very kind of you to think of us, and you have done so much as it is. You also got a nice place for me. I thank you very much for your kindness towards me. Good-by.

6.

DEC. 28, 1898.

My dear Friend,— I write again to let you know that I received handkerchief and leggings all right. I got your letter first, so I did not write until I got the package. I thank you very much for them, and H.'s leggings fit her fine.

I had a pleasant Christmas. There was a concert in the church Sunday evening, which was very good ; and Monday night they had a Christmas tree in the church. I had H. there. She had a book given to her and a box with some blocks in to play house with. She spends most her time playing house. She says she is making a house for mamma. It is quite amusing to hear her sometimes. She was taken up with Santa Claus. They had a chimney made, and he came down the chimney, blowing a horn. Then she kept asking where Santa went to after he went away. She kept very quiet while we were there.

As you say, I have been fortunate in getting good situations. I ought to be thankful that I have good health and strength to be able to work for a living for myself and child, and you and Miss — have been so kind to me since we have known you. I must close, with love to you, as ever.

Your friend.

7.

SEPT. 9, 1898.

Dear Miss H., — I received your ever-welcome letter on the eve of my return from Boston, and should have written you to come and visit us, as Mr. and Mrs. B. wished you to do, if it had not been so near the time of your return to Boston. I went to Boston, and was gone two weeks and a half. I went at that time to take G. to a doctor about his nervousness, which has grown very much worse. The doctor says it will take three months' steady treatment to do any good. Mr. B. let me have his mileage book, so I saved \$1.60 on my fare. Mr. and Mrs. B. are both kind to me as ever. I intend to stay through the winter, if nothing unforeseen now prevents. You will see Mrs. D., and she will tell you all about myself and G. He has grown quite a good deal since you saw him last December. He seems perfectly well and healthy except the nervous trouble. I shall not send him to school this winter.

It is very pleasant where I am, with a fine avenue of large maple trees around the house. Wish you could come and see it. Let me hear from you as often as convenient. With lots and lots of love from

Your loving friend.

DEC. 15, 1898.

I was very glad to receive your kind letter. It seemed a long time since I heard from you. My health is about as usual. G. is very well, and grows so fast; but his nervous trouble is no better.

You ask what I need for Christmas. I do not like to tell; but, as you have asked me, will say, if you had just as soon send the money, it might be the best way. As G. grows so fast, what you might get for him would not fit him, but act your own pleasure.

I would like to have seen you, and felt disappointed. Wish you could have come up here.

How is Miss ———, and is she at home now? Did she enjoy her trip abroad last summer?

Wish you and Miss ——— a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We are very busy just now, so will not write more this time.

In haste, with much love,

Your friend.

(It will be remembered that a wet-nurse at the Massachusetts Infant Asylum now keeps her own infant in her care all the time she is in the asylum. The mother who writes this note refers to the former arrangement by which an infant of a certain age was sent to board.)

MASSACHUSETTS INFANT ASYLUM,
Jan. 6, 1899.

Dear Miss H.,— You were very kind to remember me Christmas, and I thank you very much. I spent a very happy Christmas, considering. It would have been a great deal happier if I had had F. with me. I think that I would like to have a place next spring, and take her with me.

You said that I could use the two dollars as I think best. I have some saved for F.,—about three dollars. I think I will take the two that you sent me, and what I had, and put it in the bank. F. is looking splendid, but she cannot walk yet. I was out to Canton to see her a week ago.

Hoping you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I remain,
as ever, Yours truly.

P. S.— I am going to send you F.'s photo, and hope you will like it. She was sick when she had them taken, so they are not very good.

DEC. 27, 1898.

My dear Miss H.,— I received your letter and your present. I thank you very much for your kindness in remembering me and G. I am sorry that you have to trouble yourself about me. I had quite a number of presents from the family. G. got a very pretty rocking-chair from Miss T. Mrs. T. did not pay me until last week, and I got quite a number of things since June until December, but she never charged me for anything; but she said that I was good and faithful, that I was like one of the family. But, Miss H., I am not like one of the family. I am not so good. I am a bad girl, I think so.* G. is a good little boy, and I hope he will always remain so.

Well, Miss H., I must thank you once more for your kindness in remembering me and G. Thank you.

With much love to you and wishing you a Happy New Year.

When I go in town, I will go and see you.

(* Lest this should give a bad impression, we add that she has behaved perfectly well for two years.)

10.

(From a woman whose son, now nineteen or twenty years old, is a young man of good character, very fond of his mother, and helping to support the family. There are several members, a grandmother and grandfather and an aunt.)

Nov. 10, 1898.

Your letter received, and I was pleased to hear from you. I got three undervests, fifty cents apiece, the largest size; those three vests came to \$1.50, and the other fifty cents I used in cotton flannel. I will be more than pleased to call on you at your new room. Thanking you again and again,

I am yours truly.

My mother wishes to be remembered to you, and hopes you will call and see her when you have time.

11.

(A girl of 17.)

Dear Friend,— I write you these few lines to let you know that I am well, hoping to find you the same. I like the place very much. I can have all the fresh eggs I want to eat and all the fresh milk I want to drink. I can think of nothing else to say this time. From your friend.

12.

(This woman had left the place obtained for her, and put her child at board. Another situation was found for her, and she is now doing well.)

Dear Friend,— I am writing to you, saying that I am very sorry for what I have done. I am very lonesome, for I have boarded my baby; and I am not a bit content without her. I hope you will forgive me, and give me another chance. Hoping you will write to me and let me come back on Thursday next,

I remain your loving.

13.

You asked me to write to you in two weeks after I got here. I met Mr. — at the Union Station, and we arrived here all right. The baby stood the trip very well. He is doing so nicely, he is growing fat on the nice milk

he gets. I like here very much. The people are very pleasant, they seem to like me and the baby. It is a pleasant place. I thank you very much for all you have done for me. I will never forget it. I will close now with love.

14.

With pleasure I now drop you a few lines to let you know I am quite well and getting along nicely in my new home. I have a nice place, like it very much. Baby is quite well. He is growing quite a lot and getting very heavy. He is made quite a lot of, and is getting nice presents. I could never get in a better place with my boy, right in the country. The air is so fresh and nice. I must thank you a hundred times for getting it for me. I am glad to have the pleasure of writing to you. I remain with love.

15.

Dear Miss P.,—I now write you these few lines, hoping to find you in good health, as this leaves me at present. I hope you will forgive me for not writing before, but I thought I was expecting to go back the first of May. I don't know yet but I may be able to stay all summer. I should like very much to be able to stay all summer for the baby's sake. He is getting along very well, and so am I. There is not a time I look at the baby and think how near I was to losing him but I think of you, and think of all you have done for him and I. I shall always remember your kindness.

16.

I should have written before. But I could not in truth write to you what you wanted to hear, so I thought best not to write anything. I have been so homesick and lonesome I could not take no interest in anything. But I've got over that now, and feel that I have a great deal yet in this world to live for. My baby is a great comfort to me. She grows plump and fat as a cherry. I like Miss —— very much. She is just as nice as any one could be. She won't let me feel like a servant. We live together just as sisters. I have not much work to do, so I have a great deal of time to care for baby.

Thanking you again for all you have done for me, I remain,

Respectfully yours.

(This woman was allowed by her employer to go out for an afternoon, and stayed away several days, visiting friends. She is doing very well now.)

My dear Miss P.,— I now take my pen in hand to let you know that I am doing well. I am glad to get back, as I had a hard week of it; and I was so ashamed that I could not hold up my head, and Mrs. ——— talked to me as a mother would. I hope you will not be too hard on me, when Mrs. ——— goes to see you. I am trying to do my best, and I hope you will all forgive me for what I have done. I mean to do what is right. I had a letter from Miss ———, and she said that she was glad that I went back.

Good-night, and God bless you for all you have done for me and baby.

I received your very welcome letter, and the verses they were very nice. I read them a good deal. It made me feel happy to get such a nice letter from you, as I was feeling very blue when I got it, as I had a letter from one of my aunts a few days before. They are so mad because I keep little baby; but it don't trouble me any, for I will always do for her, and hope our blessed Lord will give me strength to do so. Baby is growing a lovely child. I take her out every day it is pleasant. She can notice now. She laughs when you speak to her: she is getting so fat. Mr. and Mrs. ——— are very much attached to her. They think she is a sweet child, and she is real good. I am going to buy her a sun-bonnet next week, as the sun is real strong here. It is Sunday afternoon, and we are going to ride. I like here very much. They are very kind to me. I remember you in my prayers every night, and will always love to hear from you, as you are my only true friend in need.

From your's truly.

x x x from baby to you.

I thought I would drop you a few lines to let you know how I am getting along. I like my place very much. The folks are very nice to me, and they are wild over the baby. They have given her a gold pin.

The baby is growing a lovely child, and just as good as she can be. I take her out riding a good deal. The country air is so beautiful, I more than enjoy it. I cannot thank you enough for all your kindness to me. You have done a great deal for me, which I shall never forget; and, if my

prayers will do any good, I will always remember you in them. Mrs. ——— says she will go and see you just as soon as she can get to Boston. She said her sister told her how nice and good you were. You will write to me sometimes, so as to feel you remember me. Good-by, and pray for me and baby.

Yours respectfully.

19.

My dear Friend,—I received your kind and welcome letter, and was very glad to hear from you; and I thank you for your kindness, and the good place you got for me. It is a good home. I like them as much as I would my own father and mother. They are very good to me and baby. I have not bought any clothes for baby since I came here, so you know that is a good help to me. They call her the pet baby. They think lots of her, and she can walk around anywhere. It is a lovely place. So I thank you very much. I will stay here as long as I can. You spoke of my being lonesome. Well, I felt very lonesome after I came; but I got all over it after a while. You spoke of giving a Christmas present. You can give what you please. I would be glad of anything. You can give baby a little something in remembrance of you. They gave me lots of Christmas presents,—an apron, pocket-handkerchiefs, two new dresses for baby, so I thought that was a lot.

20.

My dear Miss P.,—I thank you very much for sending my trunk. I was very glad to get it, as I needed it so much. I have a very nice place, and my baby is getting so fat. She is perfectly well now. It was so hot last week she was very fussy, but the weather is elegant now. The air is so nice out here it makes me feel good. The folks have just gone to ride, and I am sitting in the dining-room. Mrs. ———'s sisters have gone home. They were here for three weeks. One of them is a school-teacher. They were very nice, and took a great deal of care of baby. I keep her out doors a great deal, as I have a carriage. I bought it from the girl that lived here last for \$3. Mrs. ——— is going to let me go to Boston some day next month. I want to let you see how well my baby looks.

Yours truly.

21.

Dear Miss P.,—With pleasure I write you this letter, as I know you will be glad to hear from me. Baby is a lovely big girl now. She has got one tooth. She is creeping, and can call mamma; but she is very troublesome with her teeth. She got a little cold, and it made her real sick for a while. Mr. and Mrs. —— are very good and kind to her all summer, and have given her dresses and shoes and stockings. I think she is a lucky baby, and she has you to be thankful for it all; and your goodness to us both I shall never forget. I was to Boston to see my aunt a few weeks ago, and she thought baby was a beautiful child. I like my place just as much as ever, and hope to continue so. I remember you in my prayers every night.

I am yours very sincerely.

22.

Dear Miss P.,—I am getting along very well, and like my new home very much indeed. Both Mr. and Mrs. —— are very kind people to work for; and, if I get along here, I think I am very fortunate in securing such a good home for myself and little child. And at the same time, I am very thankful and grateful to you for getting it for me. The baby has been very cross and fretful since I came out here. He is having a hard time with his teeth. It has made it very hard for me, but Mrs. —— has been very kind and patient through it all. We hope now he is going to change for the better. Miss —— very kindly sent me a high chair for him, and that is a nice change from laying on the floor so much.

Later on, when I earn a few dollars and get myself some warm clothing for the winter, if you will allow me, and tell me when to come in and see you, I would like to have a talk with you about various things concerning my future. I have looked out for the baby first. He is well supplied for the present. Good-night, dear Miss P., and Heaven bless you.

Yours faithfully.

23.

Dear Miss P.,—I was delighted to get such a nice long letter from you, and I thank you *very* much for the many kind words it contained. To feel that you are so interested in my welfare is a great comfort to me, and helps

me bear my burden ; and I assure you that I appreciate your letters, for I know how valuable your time is, and my prayer to Almighty God is that I may be worthy of such kindness.

Baby is now nine months old, and a darling child she is. Mrs. — is so kind and thoughtful of her. I like my place as well as ever, and hope to continue so. I think baby is a very fortunate little girl in having so many interested in her. You remember Mrs. S. —, Mr. —'s sister. Well, she was out on a visit before thanksgiving. She was very glad to see baby and I. She made her one Dress and her sister one, so you can see how kind they are to her.

Baby sends you this little card as a Christmas greeting, and wishing you a *very merry* Christmas and a glad New Year. Yours gratefully.

24.

Dear Miss P.,— I must beg your pardon for not writing before. First, I must ask your forgiveness for a lie which I told you, and, in fact, I told every one ; but I have confessed to every one but you. I told you I was married, but I am not. When I wanted to get into the Home, I thought it was only for married women, so I just lied about it, and said I was married. Miss — was very shocked when I went to her and confessed all ; but, with God's help, I am never going to lie again. I am getting on pretty well here with Mrs. —, although I have not been feeling well for some time. I went to see the doctor, and he said I needed rest ; but I couldn't afford to give up work, so with God's help have been able to keep my place and take care of baby. She is growing like a "weed," and is as cunning as anything. They think so much of her, both Mr. and Mrs. —. I thank you so much for the place you got for me. I am sure I appreciate your kindness very much. My baby is beginning to cut her teeth, and that makes her a little cross ; but, then, I expect that. She goes to bed downstairs every night at five o'clock, and sleeps until nine or ten in the morning. She sleeps all night long without her bottle now, so you see I get all night's rest anyhow. I shall have to close now, as it is time for supper and I have baby to put to bed.

Your sincerely.

(The following letter is from a woman whom we first assisted as an unmarried mother, seven or eight years ago. Several years ago she married respectably.)

My dear Friend,— I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know I am feeling well and look better than I have for a good many years. It is such a beautiful place up here. Everybody seems to look well and healthy. The children are well, and my husband is feeling better than he has for a long time. I have let one of my rooms and get a dollar a week, and that helps me on the rent. I hope you and Miss C. is well. I am so thankful that I am well and my little family. I remain with love.

I received your letter, and was glad to hear from you. You asked me if M. went to a good school and Sunday-school. Yes, she does go to a very nice school and Sunday-school and church.

You asked me what I needed most.* I don't like to tell you, for you have been so good to help me when I couldn't help myself. Love from

* The husband has been ill lately, and it seemed probable that he was in a consumption.

(The following letter is about a young man now in the army in Cuba, who has an unmarried mother, who has always been satisfactory for twenty-one years.)

Your letter received, and thank you for writing so soon. Will now write a few lines about I. He had not enlisted when I wrote to you, and I did not know he had done so until after it was too late. He has been out of work nearly all the spring, and has felt quite badly about it; and, when he found he would not obtain work all summer, he thought it best to enlist. I and my family feel very badly about it, for we have become very strongly attached to him. He is a good boy, and is well liked and respected. He will go with the best wishes from many friends, both old and young; and many have expressed themselves to me that they should be sorry to have him go, for he would be missed by all. His company has not gone yet; but he reports in Haverhill every day, and is likely to go any day. We hope that all will go well with him, and that he will come back all right. I am sorry for his mother, and hope she will not take it too hard. He got your letter, and will answer it as soon as he can.

(The following ten letters are from employers. All are about unmarried women.)

1.

Perhaps you would like to know something of the family that L. is living with.

We have a large, pleasant home. My husband is active in church and village work. We are trying to throw every good influence we can around her. She is a dear, loving, humble girl, far from perfect, but the sweetest disposition I ever knew. At our last communion she stopped to it, and told me afterwards, with tears in her eyes, how she wished she was good enough to partake, and how could she be. . . . She is very easily influenced for good or bad; and I tremble for her, it would take so little to turn the balance. I feel a great responsibility, and want to do just what is best and right for L. She has faults, and tries me in many ways; but she is so willing, and tries to please, that I can but love her. I have not put much care or responsibility on her yet, but hope to put more as she gets more used to my way of doing things. She wanted me to read your letters. I am very glad she has such a friend.

(The employer also adds that L. has joined the Christian Endeavor Society of the church which the family attend.

2.

I thought I would write these few lines to you, and let you know how J. suits me. Well, she is the loveliest girl I ever had. She can do my work to suit me very well, and I think the baby is doing fine now. He was awfully cross the first few days; but he is just as good as he can be now, and we all love him so much. He has a lovely time with the dog, who loves the baby, and lies down with him, and plays with him all the time. I wish you could see him, he is so good.

3.

It has been two weeks since —— came to our home. Hence it becomes my duty as well as a privilege to write to you concerning her.

We have found her so far to be all you said, and even more. I think a sweeter disposition I never met. In short, we are very well satisfied; and already the baby is creeping into the affections of us all.

I am human, with a multitude of faults. Hence I expect the girl to be. I did not ask her anything about her circumstances, but as much of her past as she chose to tell I listened to. I promise to do the best I can for mother and child.

Very sincerely yours.

4.

We are well satisfied with L. She does her work well, and is willing to do whatever she is asked. I try to make it as easy for her as possible. I think she feels happy with us; and, as long as she does so well as at present, I shall keep her. Of course, it is so long since we have had a baby in our house that it will take some time to get used to it.

I am up around the house, but can do very little to help as yet. Of course, I shall be glad to help her as soon as I am strong enough.

Thanking you for assistance when I most needed it, I am

Yours very cordially.

5.

I like her very much, and she takes an interest in her work and does it well. We like little —— very much: she is a bright little girl. —— has been busy since she came to us a greater part of the time, as our family has been unusually large; and, I presume, when her work was done, she did not feel like writing. If all goes well, we hope to keep her for the winter here. I feel very much interested in her.

6.

According to promise, I address you, sincerely asking your pardon for keeping you waiting so long to receive an acknowledgment of your kindness in obtaining such nice help. We have been very busy; and I was expecting every day to call upon you, and had made arrangements to do so, when I was taken ill. So please do not attach any blame to L., who would have come, if possible.

And now to business. Could not you render some assistance to L.? She is worthy, and would appreciate it fully. She is nobly bearing the duties which devolve upon her for the sake of her dear sick little babe. We would gladly do more if we could. Her case is no common one. In many respects L. is a superior little woman, and brave to struggle alone. She is saving every penny to settle the milk bill of the little babe.* She

has purchased nothing whatever for herself; and such a true, brave, little young mother should have assistance.

May God bless you, and bestow in return all the good things of this life upon you. Sincerely yours.

* An old bill, contracted before we took charge of her.

7.

C. is still with me, and is well. The baby is well, and growing every day. We were working hard to get the baby into short clothes for Christmas Day, and we did. She is very cunning indeed, and good. C. and the baby have everything they need in clothes or underclothes. The only thing she actually needs is a carriage of some kind to take the child out in, for baby is so heavy that she can't carry her any distance; and, therefore, she does not go out from week's end to week's end, and they both ought to go out more. It is hard work to get C. out, anyway. However, C. will be pleased with anything you have a mind to send her. We had a very pleasant Christmas, and C. wasn't forgotten.

C. and baby would send love if they knew I was writing.

8.

Dear Miss P.,—I promised to write, and let you know how I got along with B. We got along nicely. The baby was very sick when she first came. Took cold coming out,—the change and teething. We had to have the doctor several times; but she is much better now, but will be troubled more or less until the teeth are through. She is a very good child, and we all love the little thing.

Of course, for the first two weeks or more, B. was unfit for work or care on account of being kept awake nights; and she was so frightened about the baby. I tried to make it as easy for her as I could; and now we have got straightened out, and are getting along all right. She seems as happy as can be, and contented.

Yours truly.

9.

She seems a quiet, decent girl, and voluntarily took me into her confidence, and seemed to require sympathy, which I am glad to offer for her;

and I think she is as happy and contented here as she would be anywhere, though she often expresses herself as tired of life, and deploras her folly in days past. I do my best to cheer her by words of encouragement. She is very devoted to her baby, and wishes to live to care for him. The child is very quiet, and as little trouble as is possible for one to be. N. intended to write to you, but it is such an effort for her. I told her I would thank you for so kindly and generously remembering her at Christmas; and I think she appreciates what is done for her, and is truly grateful.

I shall feel it my duty to do all I can to brighten her life, and make her content. She is willing, and tries to do her best, which is all one can require; and, although unused to any responsibility, I think she will improve. She seems desirous of remaining; and I shall try to keep along with her, if I have to obtain some one, in warm season, to take the lead of the kitchen work.

10.

The first two months she was with me I either had to do my work or else take care of her child. It was very fretful, and needed so much attention: and, when it cried, she would drop everything, and sit down with the baby, or else walk in my parlor and put that child in my arms, right before my callers. Many times I threatened to write and tell you all; but Mr. — told me how much you were doing for girls, and I made up my mind, if there was such a thing as keeping her, I would do it.

I have got her so now she is doing very well indeed. She seems willing, and tries to do all she can; and the baby is doing finely on our milk. It is fat and very strong.

— has had la grippe, and I took care of her and baby. She seemed very thankful, and tells me to tell you she has the best place in the world. When I go to ride, I take her sometimes, and have often taken her baby. She has my baby's crib, and I fitted her out with things necessary for her baby. She just said, "Tell Miss P. you take more care of baby than I do." Since the baby has our milk, she is very good indeed. I am very much pleased with her now.

We are in need of new subscribers to fully meet the expenses of the current year. The surplus on hand January 1 is caused by some of our subscriptions being received late in the year. No salaries are paid from these.

We call attention to the point that we now have a room where one of our workers may be seen five afternoons in the week. Formerly there were but two afternoons in the week when the ladies engaged in our work could be consulted, and it has been thought best to try to meet this need. No rent is paid for this room from subscriptions. It is the gift of a friend.

LILIAN F. CLARKE.

MARY R. PARKMAN.

SARAH H. WILLIAMSON.

Council.

MRS. CHARLES G. AMES.

MRS. ELIOT C. CLARKE.

MRS. CHRISTOPHER R. ELIOT.

MRS. JAMES G. FREEMAN.

MRS. W. B. KEHEW.

MISS ROSE LAMB.

MRS. C. J. PAINE.

DR. SARAH E. PALMER.

MRS. QUINCY A. SHAW.

DR. SARAH R. STOWELL.

MRS. W. L. WAKEFIELD.

MRS. J. B. WARNER.

MOTHERS ASSISTED IN 1898.

Old cases (continued from 1897)	60
New cases (first taken in 1898)	127
	187
Married women (new cases)	54
Unmarried women (new cases)	73
	127
Married women (old cases)	22
Unmarried women (old cases)	38
	60

NATIONALITY OF OLD CASES.

(Married.)

Irish	5
Irish-American	4
British Provinces	4
American	5
English	1
Irish-English	1
Welsh-Irish-American	1
Irish-German	1
	22

(Unmarried.)

British Provinces	11
Irish	8
American	8
Irish-American	4
German-American	2
Swedish	2
Portuguese	1
Unrecorded	2
	38

NATIONALITY OF NEW CASES.

(Married.)

British Provinces	12
Irish	11
American	7
English	6
Irish-American	5
Colored	4
Swedish	2
Scotch	1
Irish-English	1
German	1
Welsh	1
Polish	1
Armenian	1
Unrecorded	1
	54

(Unmarried.)

British Provinces	21
Irish	18
Irish-American	7
American	6
Swedish	7
Colored	5
English	3
English-American	1
German-American	3
French-American	1
Arabian	1
	73

AGES OF NEW CASES.

(*Unmarried.*)

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RECEIVED DURING 1898.

On hand Jan. 1, 1898 . . .	\$521.01	The Misses Kimball . . .	\$50.00
Miss Fannie Bartlett . . .	25.00	Mrs. David P. Kimball . . .	100.00
Mrs. Arthur Blake . . .	10.00	Arthur T. Lyman . . .	50.00
Mrs. S. Parkman Blake . . .	10.00	Miss Ida M. Mason . . .	50.00
Mrs. Shepherd Brooks . . .	50.00	Mrs. Frank Morison . . .	10.00
Mrs. W. S. Carter . . .	5.00	Andrew Nickerson . . .	10.00
Mrs. J. Randolph Coolidge . . .	10.00	Mrs. John Parkinson . . .	10.00
Miss Cora H. Clarke . . .	10.00	M. R. P. . . .	114.73
Mrs. Eliot C. Clarke . . .	20.00	F. H. Peabody . . .	20.00
Mrs. Frederic Simmons Clark . . .	10.00	Mrs. Dudley L. Pickman . . .	25.00
Miss Harriet E. Clarke . . .	5.00	Mrs. Neal Rantoul . . .	10.00
Miss Alice Cotting . . .	5.00	Dr. William L. Richardson . . .	50.00
Mrs. Charles P. Curtis . . .	20.00	Miss Marian Russell . . .	25.00
Mrs. Greely S. Curtis . . .	10.00	Mrs. Henry Saltonstall . . .	10.00
Miss Louise Cushing . . .	8.00	Mrs. Knyvet W. Sears . . .	25.00
Miss Louisa L. Dresel . . .	20.00	Mrs. George B. Shattuck . . .	5.00
Mrs. E. W. Emerson . . .	5.00	Mrs. G. Howland Shaw . . .	10.00
Mrs. W. H. Forbes . . .	15.00	Mrs. F. Stone . . .	10.00
Mrs. James G. Freeman . . .	5.00	Miss E. H. Storer . . .	10.00
Miss Matilda Goddard . . .	20.00	Mrs. Sarah H. Swan . . .	3.00
Miss Harriet Gray . . .	50.00	W. . . .	10.00
Mrs. Russell Gray . . .	10.00	Miss M. S. Walker . . .	25.00
Mrs. Francis B. Greene . . .	10.00	Mrs. Charles E. Ware . . .	100.00
Mrs. W. B. Greene . . .	400.00	Edward Wheelwright . . .	35.00
Henry S. Grew . . .	25.00	Miss Amy White . . .	5.00
Mrs. George Hollingsworth . . .	5.00	Mrs. J. Huntington Wolcott . . .	25.00
Mrs. John Hitchcock . . .	20.00		

DONATIONS OF CLOTHING.

Miss R. P. Wainwright.	Miss Gertrude Nicholass.
Boston Provident Association.	Miss Sever.
A Friend.	Mrs. Charles T. White.
Mrs. J. H. Morison.	Anonymous.

DESTITUTE MOTHERS AND INFANTS IN ACCOUNT WITH
SARAH H. WILLIAMSON, *Treasurer.*

Dr.

To board of women	\$752.69
Board of children	74.50
Clothing for women and children	179.49
Fares and travelling	101.80
Milk and food for infants	8.69
Advertising	122.84
Medicine	6.30
Doctors' bills	30.00
Expresses	15.16
Stationery and postage-stamps	50.14
Printing report	51.07
Sundries	37.20
Rent of room (near hospital for patients)	46.72
Total expended in 1898	<u>\$1,476.60</u>
Balance to new account	677.09
	<u><u>\$2,153.69</u></u>

Cr.

Jan. 1, 1898, by cash on hand	\$521.01
By subscriptions during 1898	1,580.73
Interest on bond	50.00
Interest on money deposited in bank	1.95
	<u><u>\$2,153.69</u></u>

Subscriptions may be sent to MRS. W. C. WILLIAMSON, 370 Marlborough Street, or to DR. C. P. PUTNAM, 63 Marlborough Street, Boston, Mass.

